

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Dulles Blocked Visit By Zhukov

By Drew Pearson

State Department officials mention. He had been in the know the inside of the Soviet Union. After Dulles, the chief, John Foster Dulles, had seemed sure to have persuaded President Eisenhower to accept Khrushchev's job.

However not to invite Marshal Zhukov to Washington last summer, figure that history inside the Kremlin might be entirely different today if Dulles' persuasion had not prevailed.

A trip by Zhukov to Washington would have enhanced his prestige with the Russian people that he could not have been denied.

What happened was that last summer the President did not want to invite his wartime buddy to Washington for a talk on improvement of Russian-American relations. This was reported by this column on Aug. 23, 1953, and later confirmed by the President in a press conference.

But Dulles talked the President out of the meeting.

At that time both Chancellor Adenauer of Germany and the British were worried about any moves which might lead to too much friendship between the United States and the U.S.S.R. and any deal on disarmament. Harold Stassen in London had been talking disarmament with the Russians privately and the British and Germans protested to Dulles. So the Secretary of State, fearing the President would get too chummy with Marshal Zhukov if he came to Washington, persuaded the President not to issue the invitation.

CIA Caught Napping

Aller Dulles' younger brother of the Secretary of State and head of Central Intelligence has been more right than wrong in predicting out backside event in Europe. But it was caught completely off base in the show down between Marshal Zhukov and party chief Nikita Khrushchev.

About the time Zhukov was in the White House, the view that the Soviet Union was fast becoming a new military power was being

Last month, furthermore the CIA chief, speaking in San Francisco, made an unusual public statement that Russia was disrupted by political "concurrents" and that Khrushchev seemed headed for trouble.

Of course by this point, of course, Allen Dulles was right. Zhukov was grabbing for power. But what Dulles underestimated was Khrushchev's ability to cope with this. He also overestimated the political power of the Red army.

Meeting on Cruiser

As far as can be pieced together, here are the incidents which caused Khrushchev to move in on the man who had helped him save his job when he faced rebellion from Molotov, Malenkov, et al., last spring.

Shortly before Marshal Zhukov left for Yugoslavia he held a secret meeting aboard the Russian cruiser Kuibyshev at Sevastopol, the great Soviet submarine base in the Black Sea. Present were the top military commanders of the Red army.

Zhukov is reported to have told them that he was opposed to any military adventures in the Near East which would risk bringing Russia into conflict with the United States. He was not against political moves in the Near East, but he was against any risk of war.

He further told Soviet commanders that Russia should concentrate on consolidating its position at home, not strike out in the Near East.

Zhukov also wanted to tighten Russian control over the satellites. As a military man, he viewed Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria as buffer states which would absorb the first blow of attack in case of war. He did not agree with Khrushchev's more lenient policy toward Poland and the satellites, and it will be recalled that it was Zhukov who stepped down on Hungary last year with the full force of the Red army.

It is already known that Zhukov had backed the Soviet military men attached to the

the military from maintaining the Communist Party.

All this apparently was too much for Khrushchev, and when the secret meeting at Sevastopol came to his attention, the head of the Communist Party moved, while Zhukov was in Belgrade, to plan to promote him upstairs to an innocuous but face-saving post. Zhukov refused. Hence the showdown inside the Kremlin.

Note—Marshal Zhukov is given credit for getting Tito to extend Yugoslav recognition to East Germany. Since Tito was looked upon as the leader of independence among the satellites, his recognition of East Germany was a real retreat for him and a victory for Zhukov's policy of a tight ring of satellite nations around Russia.